



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

Economic History and Geography

The Conservation of Natural Resources in the United States.

By CHARLES RICHARD VAN HISE. (New York: The Macmillan Co. 1910. Pp. xiv, 413.)

The Conservation of Water. By JOHN L. MATHEWS. (Boston: Small, Maynard and Co. 1910. Pp. viii, 289.)

No man in America can speak concerning conservation with more authority than President Van Hise. He was one of the leading spirits at the White House Conference of Governors called by President Roosevelt; a member of the National Conservation Commission, whose monumental report in three volumes constitutes the first authoritative inventory of the natural resources of the United States; and he has served as chairman of the Wisconsin Conservation Commission. And it was due to his initiative and influence that the western phosphate lands, perhaps the most priceless resource of the nation, were withdrawn from entry by President Roosevelt and saved—for the present at least—from the grasp of private monopoly.

In preparing this work embodying the substance of twenty lectures given at the University of Wisconsin, Dr. Van Hise has rendered another important service to the cause of conservation. For the first time we now have, in moderate compass, a scientific digest and summary of the literature relating to conservation, with foot-notes indicating the principal sources. It is, moreover, written in strikingly clear and simple language.

A brief introduction gives the history of the conservation movement in this country.

Part I is devoted to the mineral resources; the topics under each head include the size and distribution of the deposits, the rate of consumption, methods of waste, possible ways of reducing waste, and the changes needed in mineral land laws. The advantages of the leasing system are clearly shown. Special interest attaches, at this time, to the discussion of the Alaska coal claims. While controversy is carefully avoided, it is emphasized that if the Secretary of the Interior has (as Mr. Ballinger maintains) no option but to sell coal lands under existing laws, no law compels him to make the minimum price fixed by law the maximum, nor to accept any price less than private owners would obtain for the same lands.

Part II considers water as a resource—its sources, amount, the fly-off or portion lost by evaporation, the cut-off or portion used by plants or sinking into the ground beyond the reach of surface influences, and finally the run-off or portion entering the streams. In considering the various uses of water for domestic and manufacturing purposes, water power, navigation and irrigation, it is shown that all these uses depend in large part on uniformity of flow, which can be greatly increased by afforestation and the construction of reservoirs. In the section on the control of water powers, it is maintained that the public should control, but not necessarily own or operate, water powers. Control by the public, it is held, involves the regulation of rates and the readjustment, from time to time, of compensation for franchises. As to water power monopoly, it is shown that owing to the limited distances electric power can be carried, local power monopolies are possible without a general power trust.

Part III takes up the forests, with a discussion of their original area and location, present condition and ownership; the enormous waste in lumbering operations and practical remedies for such waste; the need of maintaining or restoring forests on steep slopes in order to protect both the soil and the waters; and finally, the absolute necessity of reforming tax laws if forestry is to be made feasible on private lands.

Part IV is devoted to the conservation of the land. The principal topics are the physiographic provinces of the United States; the practical operation of the various land laws; the loss of fertility through erosion, the exhaustion of essential elements, and the rise of alkalies in irrigated lands; and the possible remedies for these losses. The fundamental importance of the phosphate beds, both southern and western, is strongly emphasized; and it is argued that the exportation of phosphates should be entirely prohibited.

Part V summarizes briefly the conclusions previously reached and considers also the application of the conservation principle to human health. The appendix contains the Declaration of the first Conference of Governors relative to conservation, and also the Declaration of Principles subsequently adopted by the North American Conservation Conference. Last but not least there is a good index.

As will be seen from this examination of the contents, the work is to a considerable extent concerned with the technical

or engineering aspects of conservation; yet in every chapter it reaches into the field of economic policy, and it is notably sane and sound as to its economic doctrines.

There is one serious omission, that of the natural grass-lands, which are certainly not less in need of conservation than are the forests. The reviewer also ventures to question whether a special franchise tax ought to be imposed on water power companies if the rates are properly regulated. In that case, as the author recognizes, the tax would be shifted to the users of power; but it may easily happen that it will be shifted on to the consumers of the products manufactured by water power, and in that case is likely to become a regressive tax. In any event, it is not clear that the final incidence of such a tax will bear any proper relation to tax-paying ability; nor that a part of the burden of taxation should be thus shifted from the general body of property owners (or income receivers) to the consumers of certain commodities or services. That might well result in a special tax on—for example—those who ride in the street-car, with a corresponding exemption in favor of the man who uses an automobile.

The work by Mr. Mathews on *The Conservation of Water* is of an altogether different type. Mr. Mathews is a journalist who was for a time connected with the Chicago Sanitary Canal. He has also made some special study of engineering problems on the Mississippi as shown by his previous book, *Remaking the Mississippi* (1909). The present work might well be called *The Romance of Conservation* so far as it pertains to the uses of water. It is intended for popular consumption and runs to strong adjectives, such as enormous, astounding, amazing, fabulous. Even the number of paper mills run by water power is alleged to be "fabulous" (p. 137), and the speed of electricity to be "infinite" (p. 99). In line with this tendency, scientific matters are sometimes carelessly handled. Thus the author is clearly some years behind events in representing nitrogen as the crucial element in soil fertility, rather than phosphorus (p. 131). One is also interested to know the authority for the statement that a certain forest in France makes a difference of 12 inches in the rainfall (p. 68); or the kind of sandy soil which is at the same time impervious (p. 149). Still more startling is the prophecy that within ten years we shall transmit electric power a thousand miles (p. 98). However, while offering little for the

serious student, the book is attractive in many ways, being well illustrated and rather cleverly written. It may thus serve a useful purpose in helping to popularize the conservation idea.

EDWARD VAN DYKE ROBINSON.

University of Minnesota.

A Documentary History of American Industrial Society. Volumes VII and VIII, *Labor Movement, 1840-1860.* Edited by JOHN R. COMMONS. (Cleveland: A. H. Clark Co. 1910. Pp. 364, 346. \$50 for set of ten volumes.)

The interesting collection of documents brought together in these two volumes of the *Documentary History* is as kaleidoscopic and varied as was the labor movement during the years 1840-1860. Selections are quoted illustrative of the general economic and social conditions of the period, of Owenism and experiments in communism, of land reform and its relation to other reforms, of agitation and legislation respecting the hours of labor, and finally of labor organizations. The contents in their broad scope illustrate the history of American industrial society rather than that of the labor movement in the narrower sense. At first the multiplicity of topics and their apparent lack of connection is rather confusing to one who is trying to follow the thread of the labor movement through the maze of varied interests. For those who lived in the midst of the agitation, the reforms and experiments, and the failures and doubts, it must have taken a clear vision and a cool brain to maintain one's mental poise.

The confused picture thus presented becomes clearer when one realizes that there were really two movements during this period—one a broad, humanitarian reform movement which endeavored to ameliorate the condition of labor by reorganizing industrial society; and the other a narrower class struggle of the workers themselves—the labor movement in the narrower sense. Professor Commons has given rather more space to the former than to the latter of these, and has endeavored to show the relation between the various reforms and the labor movement. That the latter should have been all but submerged in the wave of socialism which swept over the country during the forties, when attempts were made in every part of the country to realize Fourier's scheme of communal living, is intelligible, and is fully substantiated by the documents. Less convincing is the connection